

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the specification as follows:

- On page 5, before the heading "Description of a preferred embodiment of the invention," please insert the following paragraph.

In another embodiment of the invention, there is a burner membrane comprising at least one layer comprising a needled fiber web which is compressed to a porosity of between 60% and 95%, and which comprises heat-resistant stainless steel fibers, wherein the fiber web is needled in one step and compressed to the porosity of between 60% and 95% in a subsequent step, wherein the burner membrane is not sintered, and wherein the stainless steel fibers are made from a high temperature alloy. In another embodiment of the invention, the stainless steel fibers are made from a high temperature oxidation resistant alloy. In another embodiment of the invention, the stainless steel fibers have an elemental composition consisting essentially of Al, Cr, Y and a balance Fe. In another embodiment of the invention, the stainless steel fibers have an elemental composition of up to 20% Cr, 0.5 to 12% Al and 0.1 to 3% Y. In another embodiment of the invention, the stainless steel fibers contain chromium and aluminum.